the national archives

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3. Form 81

EXTRACT.

Extract for File No.: PF.44990. Name: ROBESON, Paul.

Original in File No.: Destroyed. Serial: Receipt Date:

Original from: SummaryofWorldBroadcasts. Under Ref.: Dated:

Extracted on: 5.1.50. by: MTRT Section B.1.b.

BROADCAST BY MRS. ROBESON.

Another NCNA report (15.49, 23.12.49) dealt with a broadcast over Peking radio on 19th December by Mrs. Selanda ROBESON, fraternal delegate to the Asiatic Women's Conference. She complained that the US Government was controlled by 60 families using the country's resources and Press and radio facilities for war preparations. Many American citizens, especially negroes, Jews, Communists and "progressives" were denied freedom of thought, speech and assembly despite the American Constitution. As a negress, the speaker felt this very keenly; the 14,000,000 negroes born in the USA were never certain at what moment their lives or liberty might be imperilled by lynching or discriminatory legislation. This had been well illustrated by the "Peekskill incident" when fascists had tried to sabotage a concert by Paul ROBESON. Within a week, however, trade unionists had formed a security guard of 6,000 men to protect

Catalogue Reference:KV/271829 Image Reference:

a concert held at the same place which had proved a great success. After the concert a mob had attacked members of the audience while armed State police had "looked on with amusement"; but the security guard had come to the rescue although the police had tried to beat them up and had arrested some of them. The incident had already become "a classic in the battle against rising fascism in the USA".

Catalogue Reference:KV/2/1829 Image Reference:3

SECRET

Receipt Date 22.12.49.

23/12

EXTRACT FROM TELECHECK ON VINCENT 20.12.49. FOR PF.44990 ROBESON.

(Original in PF.79,001 Supp.Vol)

I/c from BILL to MARGARET.

Margaret said she had had a big idea. She thought she would organise a social when Paul ROBESON came and invite him as a guest visitor.

10.1.50

4/1/50

SECRET

Catalogue Reference:KV/2/1829 Image Ref

CUTTING FROM DAILY WORKER, 17.12.49. 134

Pa in PF 44990

Robeson at DW rally

Daily Worker Reporter

PAUL ROBESON will speak at the Daily Worker's 20th Anniversary Meeting, which will be held at Harringay Arena, London, on Sunday, February 12, at 6 p.m.

Other speakers will include Jacques Duclos, French Communist leader, the Very Rev. Dr. Hewlett Johnson, Dean of Canterbury, Harry Pollitt, general secretary of the Communist Party, and J. R. Campbell, Editor of the Daily Worker.

The Communist Choir will sing, under the direction of Alan Bush, and Unity Theatre are co-operating in the production of a great pageant of colour, music and marching.

There are 11,000 seats to be sold at 1s. 6d., 2s. 6d. and 3s. 6d. and already the Hackney Borough Committee of the Communist Party has made a block booking of 1,000 seats.

Many groups of readers in the Provinces will be coming by coach. Readers are advised to send their orders in **immediately** by post, **with cash**, to the Daily Worker, 75 Farringdon Road, London, E.C.1. Mark all envelopes "Anniversary."

PF 44990 4/1/58

Catalogue Reference:KV/2/1829

PF.44990.

B/13 23/12

B 42

Extract from "Daily Worker", 16 December, 1949.

Robeson sues for assault

MR. PAUL ROBESON, the famous Negro singer, and 27 others yesterday filed a suit for £714.000 damages for alleged assault, injuries and loss of civil rights when he appeared at a rally in New York State several months ago.

The action was against two ex-Servicemen's organisations and 14 other people.

In a clash near Peekskill on August 27 about 500 ex-Servicemen engaged in a pitched battle with thousands of concertgoers. At least eight people were injured, three seriously. At least 54 people were sent to hospital as a result of a second clash on September 4.

6/1/50

Form 81

EXTRACT.

Extract for File No.: P.F.44,990. Name: ROBESON.

Original in File No.: P.F.40,526. Serial: 113a. Receipt Date: 3.12.49.

Original from: Int. letter. Under Ref.: None. Dated: 30.11.49.

Extracted on: 4.1.50. by D.J. Section: R.4.

Extract from intercept letter from DEVINE, Communist, to BONNE, mentioning ROBESON.

I am afraid the possibilities of ROBESON coming to this country are receding. In the circumstances I have written a letter to DUCLOS, a copy of which I attach.

.....

Catalogue Reference:KV/2/1829 Image Reference:3

Form 61

EXTRACT.

Extract for File No.: P.F.44990 Name: ROBESON Paul

Original in File No.: O.F.157 Serial: 352a. Receipt Date:

Original from: Summary of World Brodcasts. Under Ref.: Part I No.62. Dated: 2.12.49.

Extracted on: 10.1.50. by: B.H. Section: B.4.

Note from Summary of World Broadcasts re Women's International Democratic Federation, mentioning Mrs. Paul Robeson.

Eslanda Robeson (Mrs. Paul Robeson) was present in Moscow at the meeting of the Women's International Democratic Federation.

Catalogue Reference:KV/2/1829 Image Reference:

BIB 23/12

1330

Form 61

EXTRACT.

tract for File No.: P.F.44,990. Name: ROBESON, Paul.

ginal in File No.: Serial: Receipt Date:

Original from: B.B.C. Monitoring Report no. 3,425. Under Ref.: None. Dated: 28.11.49.

Extracted on: 22.12.49. by: D.J. Section: B.4.

Extract from B.B.C. Monitoring Report re Imperialist Pressure in Asia and Africa mentioning ROBESON.

.....

Notice was also taken of the "All India Congress of Partisans of Peace" at Calcutta which, Tass reported, had overcome "cruel repressions" and the refusal of the Indian Government to give visas to FADEYEV, JOLIOT-CURIE, Professor BERNAL, Paul ROBESON and others from the West and had pledged itself "never to fight against the U.S.S.R.

.....

Catalogue Reference:KV/2/1829 Image Reference:3

Form 81

EXTRACT.

tract for File No.: P.F. 44,990. Name: ROBESON.

ginal in File No.: S.F. 425/Far East. Serial: 105a. Receipt Date: 10.1.50.

Original from: UK.High Commissioner,India. Under Ref.: No.X1978. Dated: 21.11.49.

Extracted on: 12.1.50. by: C.E.T. Section: R.4.

Extract from Inward Telegram to Commonwealth Relations Office,from U.K.High Commissioner in India,re visas for Calcutta Peace Congress.

My telegram No.269 Saving. The Home Secretary told Roberts today that no foreigners were being given visas for the Calcutta Peace Congress with the exception of one Dutchman who had been given a visa by mistake on the recommendation of a friend of the Prime Minister. On the advice of the Home Department the Ministry of External Affairs were accordingly informing the Soviet Ambassador that visas would not repeat not be forthcoming for Mr.FADEYEV and two other Soviet citizens for whom facilities had been requested by the Soviet Embassy.

.....

Catalogue Reference:KV/2/1829 Image Reference:3

1A 20/12

(27)

Our Ref.:

Your Ref.: PF.44990 — K. PA.

132a

Name: ROBESON, Paul

Identified as:

of:

Letter from Glasgow Police ref. and date: A/34/A/69(2) of ~~18~~ 19th November, 1949

Remarks: Appointed Hon. Life Member of Scottish-USSR Society at Congress held in Glasgow weekend commencing 29th October, 1949.

(Covering letter from C.C.Glasgow P.A'd in OF.160/7. Receipt date 21.11.49)

PKP K4
22/12/49

Catalogue Reference:KV/2/1829

Pa in PF 44990 (55)

B 25/11

Cutting from Summary of World Broadcasts. Part I. No.58. 18.11.49. 13b

US-SOVIET FRIENDSHIP

The dinner organised at the Waldorf-Astoria, New York, by the National Council of US-Soviet Friendship on the occasion of the October Revolution anniversary and the 16th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the USA and the USSR was very fully reported during the period under review, and summaries of the speeches were widely broadcast in most foreign-language services. The dinner, at which Dr. John Kingsbury was in the chair, had been attended by 1,000 people, and speakers had, in the words of Tass, "called for an intensification of the fight for peace" and stressed the need for US - Soviet friendship. They had been greeted with tremendous enthusiasm. Of the American speakers Paul Robeson received much attention. Vyshinsky's oration was given at length.

The substance of the speeches quoted is given below in sentences extracted from the Tass service for the Slav area (14.11.49) and a home service transmission (0[illegible]5, 14.11.49).

Paul Robeson

The very existence of the Soviet Union and the example it has set to the world by doing away with discrimination based on the colour of a man's skin and nationality constitutes a true struggle for peace and democracy and enables us Negroes to attain full freedom in our time. What sort of fight for freedom could the Negroes put up if the forces of imperialism had not been weakened throughout the world?

Mao Tse-tung has explained to what extent the liberation of China is due to the decisive influence of the USSR in international affairs and the new balance of power caused by the defeat of fascism, the creation of the people's democracies and the struggle of colonial peoples and the masses of the capitalist world against reaction. Could there have been a fight for freedom in the Southern States of the USA but for this new balance of power?

When the Negro populations of Africa and the West Indies today present their demands to the world for self-determination, they do so because they know they have a powerful friend and protector - the Soviet Union. No imperialist wolf masquerading as a well-meaning watch-dog can persuade them that Moscow is an oppressor of small nations.

As an artist, I know what the culture of the USSR means to the young artists of our days. As a human being, I know that the USSR is working and fighting for social progress. Only those who uphold US-Soviet friendship are true American patriots. Those who foster wars and the destruction of civilisation betray the interests of the American people. I have always been and always shall be a friend of the USSR because I have always been an anti-fascist and a fighter for the dignity and freedom of all men. (Tass in Russian for Abroad 14.11.49)

Catalogue Reference:KV/2/1829 Image Reference:

Pa PF 44990

130a

Extract from "Daily Worker", Thursday, 10 November 1949

Off to Moscow

Mrs. Paul Robeson, wife of the Negro singer, and Mrs. Muriel Draper, mother of dancer Paul Draper, left New York by air yesterday for Moscow.

Catalogue Reference:KV/2/1829 Image Reference:3

AIRMAIL No. IPI/ 455

SECRET

129a

8th November, 1949.

PF.44990/IPI/PCB

S.L.O., New Delhi.

Many thanks for your telegram No. ND/324/49 dated 5th November, 1949, about Paul ROBESON. It came most opportunely for the C.R.O., that day, asked whether we had any information about the attitude of Indian authorities towards him.

I enclose a copy of a note which we sent to the C.R.O. with a covering minute. I think it would be wise not to thrust on the D.I.B. information about ROBESON, but if he asks for it you could give him the contents of paragraphs 1, 3, 4 and 5. Paragraph 2 would obviously have to be edited for his consumption.

P. C. Bamford,

for Director General.

Enclosure.

PCB/KDT

IPI/KDT
10.11.49

Catalogue Reference:KV/2/1829

SECRET

6.11.49.

PAUL ROBESON.

In 1947 he was Secretary of the International Committee on African Affairs - a Communist penetrated body.

2. In mid February, 1949 he came to the U.K. While here he paid particular attention to Indian and African students, and the British Communist Party is known to have been pleased with his activities among coloured people. On 25.3.49. he spoke, with Dr. Dadoo, at the Friends House, Marylebone, against racial discrimination.

3. From the U.K. he attended in April the Communist dominated Paris Peace Congress at which he took an active part.

4. At the end of May he left the U.K., and attended the 9th Session of the Czech Communist Party at Prague. He also visited Moscow.

5. His membership of the Communist Party is not proved but his secret membership is strongly suspected. He is certainly most friendly with Communists and fellow travellers.

Catalogue Reference:KV/2/1829 Image Ref

I.P.I. No./

4523

128a

7th November, 1949.

PF.44990/PCB/IPI

C.R.O., Mr. Greenhill.

On the 5th November you asked to have urgently information about Paul Robeson and his movements.

2. On the 4th November we had, by telegram, asked S.L.O., New Delhi whether the press report was true that Robeson would preside at a Peace Conference in Calcutta in the 3rd week of November, and what was the attitude of the Government of India to his visit. The S.L.O. replied that the report was believed to be true; that the Government of India had as yet no information from their representative abroad, and that the D.I.B. was opposed to the grant to him of travel facilities for India.

3. I attach a note prepared from information available in the Security Service. I have not had time to get a considered note from S.I.S. but gather that there is not much that they could add. As far as they know Robeson is still in America.

4. The Government of India will have to decide between their inclination to welcome a friend of coloured people, and their desire to keep a Communist out of India.

P. C. Bamford,
for Director General.

PCB/KDT

The C.R.O. request was by telephone

Catalogue Reference:KV/2/1829 Image R

SECRET

6.11.49.

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SECRET

Catalogue Reference:KV/2/1829 Ima

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

Please [illegible] to File [illegible] 5 Nov

Precedence: IMMEDIATE *Security Classification*: SECRET

From: SLO INDIA Office File No. PF 44990 Originator's No. ND/324/49

Date of Origin 5.11.49.

Rp Passed for Action to IPI Date of Receipt 5.11.49.

Inf Copies to B1b Deciphered by LBC/MC

Reference your telegram DS/2790 of November 4th.

Press report ROBESON's intention visit India believed true. Indian Government has no information from representative abroad yet. Bureau not in favour granting Indian visa.

O.T.P.

The text of this telegram is **Unparaphrased**, and must not be distributed outside British Government Departments or Headquarters, or re-transmitted, even in cipher without being **Paraphrased**. Messages marked 'O.T.P.' need not be paraphrased.

S. Form 100.

B1B 5.11.49

Catalogue Reference:KV/2/1829 Image Reference:3

S. Form 98.

SECRET TELEGRAM FOR DESPATCH IN CIPHER

127 Z

4509

ROUTINE

Office File No. PF.44990 Section of Origin I.P.I.

Date 4th November 1949 Signed [signature]

To: SLO, NEW DELHI

Copy to B.l.b.

Reference your letter / our telegram No. ..... of .....

RECEIVED
4 NOV 1949

Is there truth in press report that Paul ROBESON will preside at a Peace Conference at Calcutta in third week of November? Can you ascertain attitude of Government of India towards such a visit?

No. 2790/49
Date. 4.11.49
Enciphered by [illegible]

The text of this telegram is **Unparaphrased**, and must not be distributed outside British Government Departments or Headquarters, or re-transmitted, even in cipher, without being **Paraphrased**. Messages marked 'O.T.P.' need not be paraphrased.

Catalogue Reference:KV/2/1829 Image Reference:3

(28943) Wt.49535/3336 20,000 1/45 A.& E.W.Ltd. Gp.698 J.7260

127

Telephone message from the C.P.O.

Sir William Jenkin rang to say that the U.K. High Commissioner reported that according to the Indian Press Paul ROBESON is to preside at a Peace Conference which is to take place at Calcutta in 3rd week of November.

Sir William Jenkin asked us to find out if possible whether the Government of India were agreeable to ROBESON's visit.

I.P.I.
4.11.49

(With the concurrence of B.I.B., a cable was sent to S.L.O. New Delhi)

Catalogue Reference:KV/2/1829

CUTTING FROM DAILY WORKER
25.10.49.

85
266

ROBESON'S MESSAGE

'We fight with you for peace'

PAUL ROBESON has sent the following message of greeting to the British Peace Committee:

"Dear friends and brothers:

"From the progressive part of America which was represented at the great Conference of Partisans for Peace in Paris and at the recent American Continental Peace Conference in Mexico City, I send warmest greetings to the British Peace Conference.

"From what I saw and heard during my concert tour of England last year, and from what I have seen and heard since my return home in speaking and singing in cities all across the United States, I know that the will of the masses of the people in both countries is for peace.

WAR POLICY

"The anti-Soviet war policy of the Churchills and Bevins and the Trumans and Deweys goes hand in hand with the cold war which the British Government and United States Government wage with increasing ruthlessness against labour, against the Negro people and against the Colonial peoples of Asia, Africa and the West Indies.

"It is the same anti-Soviet war policy and hysteria deliberately stirred up here in America which accounts for the infamous Fascist attacks at Peekskill, the increasing mob violence and the terrorisation against Negroes throughout the United States.

"It accounts too for the thought-control measures aimed at wiping out constitutional rights of all Americans, the latest expression of which is to be seen in the shameful trial and sentencing of the leaders of the Communist Party of the United States.

CREATE NEW WORLD

"But we Americans have just begun to fight back. American Fascism is far from the final goal of victory here.

"Together with you in England and the democratic strength of peoples in other lands throughout the world, we will, I am confident, defeat the warmongers and create a new world of peace and freedom for all peoples."

F. 449

Catalogue Reference:KV/2/1829

copies in: PF.44990 - ROBESON.
PF. 117162 - DEMBOWSKI.
PF. - d'ARBOUSSIER.
SF. 491/29/3.
OF. 186 - W.F.S.W.
Letter Book.
File.

SECRET

120

OF.347/B.1.b/WMD.

28 September, 1949.

Dear Joy,

After holding some form of peace demonstration on 2 October, the British Peace Committee, with whose activities you are familiar, is intending to convene a "congress" on 22 October, 1949, at the Lime Grove Baths, Hammersmith, W.6.

We have reason to believe that Professor Jan DEMBOWSKI, the President of the Polish Peace Committee, who has been closely associated with the World Federation of Scientific Workers, has been invited to attend. DEMBOWSKI was prominent at the Wroclaw World Congress of Intellectuals in August 1948 and was then closely associated with Jerzy BORESZJA, the leading Polish communist who assumed the position of secretary-general of that conference. In April 1949 DEMBOWSKI took a vigorous part in the Paris World Congress of Partisans of Peace. He also spoke at the Moscow Peace Conference which was held at the end of August this year.

Another person likely to be invited is Gabriel d'ARBOUSSIER, a French negro communist who is known as the secretary-general of the Democratic Union of French Africa and vice-president of the permanent Peace Committee set up in Paris after the Paris Peace Congress. d'ARBOUSSIER spoke at the Moscow Peace Congress.

Paul ROBESON may also have been invited. There are reasons for believing that the British Peace Committee has so far enjoyed little success in its preparations for the October Peace Congress and that few British delegates and organisations have yet been willing to promise attendance. The more unsatisfactory the response to invitations, therefore, the more likely is it that endeavours will be made to persuade ROBESON to appear. In view of the publicity which has been given to the recent Peekskill episode in the United States, ROBESON could be relied upon to focus considerable attention on such a demonstration.

Yours sincerely,

G. R. MITCHELL

G.R. Mitchell.

M.G.L. Joy, Esq.,
Foreign Office.

WMD/DVW.

Identical letters sent to Miss de Fossard SIS
Mr. Bunley Home Office.

SECRET

181

127X

EXTRACT.

for File No.: P.F. 44,990 Name: ROBESON.

l in File No.: S.F. 455/8 Serial: Receipt Date: 1.11.49.

riginal from: Int.letter Under Ref.: ---------- Dated: 27.10.49.

xtracted on: 16.12.49. by: PJM Section: E.4.

Copy of int.letter from Pat Devine,National Organiser, Peoples Press Printing ciety Ltd.,(Publishers of Daily Worker) 75 Farringdon Rd.,London,E.C.1. to b HORNE,Scottish District C.P. 57 Miller St.,Glasgow, mentioning ROBESON.

Thanks for your letter about ROBESON, the Dean and DUCLOS for Glasgow for February 13th,1950, which I have noted.

Insofar as ROBESON is concerned if he is here we will certainly raise it. You will understand, of course, that there are two serious difficulties in the way. First the situation in America is such that it may be felt impossable to allow ROBESON to leave. Second he is connected with so many other organisations in this country it may be difficult to keep him for a full week end for the "Daily Worker".

Insofar as the Dean is concerned I have just had a letter from him in which he states that the conditions of his health makes it necessary that he curtail his out-of-town speaking engagements. Consequently we cannot make any arrangements too far ahead for him, My own opinion is that Duclos will be the best bet although, as you will understand, Harry will have the last say about the disposition of his body.

Having in mind allthese points, Bob, you may bet your life I will try to get the trinity of speakers for Scotland.

Catalogue Reference:KV/2/1829 Image Reference:3

FROM THE PRESS SECTION.

Daily Express

Date 14 - 9 - 49.

Pa. Bth in PF 44990 (mm).

1251

COMMUNIST HERO of the moment, Paul Robeson, is thinking of capitalising all the attention he has had from those concert riots. If he can establish a New York residence in time he will run against Republican John Foster Dulles and Trumanite Herbert Lehman for a vacant Senate seat this autumn.

20.9.49.
Pond R4

FOR PF.44990. ROBESON

124c

EXTRACT from Summary of World Broadcasts Part V 13th September, 1949

Invitation to Paul Robeson

MESSAGE FROM CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS The All-China Arts and Literature Workers' Association and the All-China Association of Musicians sent fraternal greetings to Paul Robeson and invited him to Liberated China. They protested against the "criminal" disturbances by an "American fascist gang" at the last concert given by the Negro singer, said the NCNA (23.00, 7.9.49), and expressed the respect of the Chinese working people for this "heroic fighter for world peace and people's democracy and real friend of the peoples of China and of the Soviet Union". Whereas the Wall Street magnates were helping Chiang Kai-shek to kill millions of Chinese, Robeson and Howard Fast had shown themselves the outstanding representatives of the American people fighting for progress despite suppression and persecution by American reactionaries. The message ended by assuring Robeson that the masses of the Chinese people were waiting to hear his songs against imperialism, fascism, warmongering and racial discrimination and his songs praising democracy, peace and human happiness.

Catalogue Reference:KV/2/1829 Image Reference:3

RET.

9.49.

PF.44990

Robeson)

Extract from Telecheck on British Soviet Society Line 1659. 9.9.49.

124b

i/c from Alan BUSH to Bill WAINWRIGHT to read him the first two verses about having been comrades in arms. BUSH then referred to the orchestra and asked Bill to tell him how much money he had as it would be very difficult to do it with 12 instruments. Bill then said the hall would cost £650, extras £100, advertising and printing £350, speakers, Henry WALLACE and ROBESON, £350. WALLACE was out of it now but ROBESON was still a possible so they must allow £100. £150 for orchestra, choir etc. of which BUSH could count on £75.

(Original PA. in OF.160/1(1) Supp.)

11.02.

CPS/BUS 27.5.49

(87)

FROM THE PRESS SECTION.

Star

Date 10. 9. 49

Pa in PF 44990

Robeson For Senate, Call

The U.S. Comunist Party has decided to support Paul Robeson, as a candidate for the U.S. Senate if Henry Wallace, former U.S. Vice-President, does not enter as a candidate. This was announced by Mr Michael Quill, President of the International Transport Workers' Union at Saratoga Springs, New York, says BUP.

Mr Wallace has been mentioned as a possible candidate on the American Labour Party ticket, but it was reported he was [illegible] to stand for election.

R4 14/9.

Catalogue Reference:KV/2/1829 Image Re